

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:952
ANSWERED ON:01.03.2000
C.T.B.T. SIGNATORY COUNTRIES .
RAGHUNANDAN LAL BHATIA

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that besides CTBT document, Big Five nations have signed side agreements, memoranda of understanding and exchanged other classified documents;
- (b) if so, whether these powers have given special rights to each other under these side agreements;
- (c) if so, whether these countries have under these agreements defined the permissible experiments and tests which they alone can conduct;
- (d) if so, whether they have signed unto themselves, the role of permanent members of the Executive Council of CTBT Organisation;
- (e) if so, whether the Government still contemplating of signing the CTBT; and
- (f) if so, the reasons thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH)

- (a) to (c) The Comprehensive Nuclear Test ban Treaty (CTBT) prohibits nuclear explosive testing, an obligation that applies equally to all states parties. However, there exists an understanding that activities relating to development, non-explosive testing, production and safe maintenance of nuclear arsenals are permissible though no definition has been provided in the CTBT. Non-nuclear weapon-states party to the NPT cannot undertake permissible activities because of their obligations under the NPT. India is not a party to the NPT, yet is a nuclear weapon state; as such India can undertake the full range of activities subject to its own technical capabilities.
- (d) Under the CTBT, 1/3rd of the seats on the Executive Council are to be filled in on the basis of indicative criteria of number of monitoring facilities, expertise in monitoring technologies and contribution to budget. This is assessed as providing countries such as the United States, Russia, United Kingdom, France, China and India with the possibility of continuous membership. As is the practice in multilateral groupings in international forums, regional groups under the CTBT are free to enter into understandings on rotation of seats on the Executive Council. Accordingly the US for example has reached an understanding with the states of the North American and Western Europe region, as defined by the treaty, providing that the US would always have a seat on the EC.
- (e), (f) India's position on the CTBT was articulated by the Prime Minister in the UN General Assembly in September 1998 and in Parliament in December 1998. This was reiterated by the External Affairs Minister at the UN General Assembly in September 1999. The priority of our meeting the country's national security concerns having been addressed, the government believes that we now need to convey reassurance to the international community and, in this regard, desires to develop a national consensus. The Government is encouraged by the constructive response to its efforts to build a consensus on the issue of the CTBT and intends to pursue this exercise.